

First Unitarian Society of Ithaca

Board of Trustees Meeting

July 1, 2021 Minutes

Therese O'Connor called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) to order at 6:36pm on Thursday, July 1, 2021.

Trustees Present: Simon Catterall, Therese O'Connor, Margaret Nichols, Nancy Miller, Diana Nier (Clerk), John Gaines, Elton Hall, Don Barber, Valerie Graves (via Zoom), and Walt Peck (Treasurer, ex officio).

Trustees Absent: XXXX

FUSIT Members & Guests: Fred Balfour, Harry Dutton, Michelle Waffner (Administrator)

Handouts:

- [Parliamentary Procedure Proposal](#)

Agenda Item # 1: Welcome and Introductions

- Therese led the Board and guests in round robin checking in.

Agenda Item # 2: Board Covenant

- Review of the current Board Covenant
- Suggestion to reword covenant to be shorter and more straightforward. Diana volunteered to undertake this project

MOTION: The Board adopts the covenant as written, with an intention to vote on a condensed version later this year. Moved by John Gaines, seconded by Nancy Miller. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 3: Parliamentary Procedure

- Don explained the Parliamentary Procedure Proposal, which is a simplified version of Robert's Rules of Order.
- The main goal of these rules is to keep the Board focused. When a motion is before the Board, the Board must continue to grapple with that issue until it is resolved or officially tabled to be revisited in the future.

MOTION: The Board will operate according to the Parliamentary Procedure Proposal put forth on 6/24/21. Moved by Don Barber, seconded by Elton Hall. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 4: Nomination and Election of Officers

- Diana Nier volunteered to continue serving as Clerk and was accepted onto the slate.
- Walt nominated Therese O'Connor as president. She respectfully declined.

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- Elton nominated Don Barber as president. He respectfully declined to serve as a sole president, but would be willing to serve as a co-chair.
- John suggested that it might be best, in a time of transition, for someone who has served on the Board in 2020-21 or in a prior term.
- Elton suggested that given this is a time of transition, it would not be an obstacle to have someone new serve as chair. The Board has a lot of reorganization to do. He suggested Don as president and John Gaines as vice president.
- Therese offered to be vice president with either Don or John as president.
- Nancy noted that it would be helpful to have a woman as either president or vice president to balance a male minister and male treasurer. She is unwilling to be president, but would be willing to be vice president
- Therese suggested Valerie, who respectfully declined
- Walt nominated Don for president and Therese for vice president. Elton seconded the nomination.
- Don and Therese would need to set up a communication plan, since his internet access is spotty.
- Elton, Margaret, and Simon respectfully declined to serve as officers this year, due to other commitments.
- Margaret suggested an expanded EXCO, with two people sharing the position of president. John respectfully declined to serve as vice president.

MOTION: The Board elects Don Barber as President, Therese O'Connor as Vice President, and Diana Nier as Clerk. Moved by Elton Hall, seconded by John Gaines. **PASSED.** (one abstention)

Agenda Item # 5: Set Board Monthly Meeting Date & Time

- Meetings have been Wednesdays, 6:30pm to 8:00pm, on the second Wednesday of the month. Wednesday is a good day for all current Board members
- The third Wednesday of the month would be better for Valerie than the second
- Question about how this would affect Board communications, vis a vis the midweek announce email and the monthly newsletter. We will miss the newsletter deadline, but this will not affect the midweek announce communication summary
- EXCO will meet on the second Wednesday of each month

MOTION: The Board will meet 3rd Wednesday of each month, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm. Moved by Diana Nier, seconded by Nancy Miller. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 6: Establish Board/Staff Retreat Date

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- Rev. Johnson will not necessarily be physically in Ithaca until late August, but will be available via Zoom and other methods starting August 1.
- We would like him to be physically present at the retreat, if possible. Therese will contact him about that.
- It might be helpful to split this into chunks, one on Friday afternoon/evening and on on the following Saturday
- Suggestion of Friday, August 20 (4-7pm) and Saturday, August 21 (9am-12pm)

MOTION: The 2021 Board/Staff retreat will be held at 4:00pm to 7:00pm on Friday, August 20 and 9:00am to 12:00pm on Saturday, August 21. Moved by Therese O'Connor, seconded by Margaret Nichols. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 7: Appoint Committee to Develop Retreat Agenda

- Discussion of who has time to serve on this committee
- Committee members need to fill six hours. General themes are mission and vision, organization, and Board/Staff partnership. This year, introduction to the minister will also be a significant element.
- Friday evening is probably Board-only and Saturday is Board/Staff together.
- Staff members = Rev. Johnson, Emily Richards (DRE), Michelle Waffner, Loretta Heimbuch, and Stephanie Ortolano. Staff often have their own separate retreat before the joint session, just as the Board does.

MOTION: The retreat agenda committee will consist of Elton Hall, Fred Balfour, and Valerie Graves. Moved by Don Barber, seconded by Therese O'Connor. **PASSED.**

Agenda Item # 8: Keys

- Board currently does plate count, which requires a master key (#2) in order to access the office and the offertory closet
- #4 keys only open the building
- Walt suggested that all Board members should turn in their keys at the end of their terms, to prevent excess issuance of keys

MOTION: So long as the Board conducts the plate count, all Board members will be issued a #2 master key. Moved by John Gaines, seconded by Margaret Nichols. **PASSED.** (7 to 2)

Agenda Item # 9: Meeting Summary

- The incoming Board met on Wednesday, July 1, to organize ourselves. We have elected Don Barber as president, Therese O'Connor as vice president, and Diana Nier as clerk.

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- Nancy Miller will write a short statement expressing our availability, which Don will send to the congregation at large.

MOTION TO ADJOURN. Moved by Therese O'Connor, seconded by Simon Catterall. **PASSED.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:08pm.

Minutes taken by Diana Nier, 7/1/21.